

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claim 1 is present in this application. By this Amendment, the specification and claim 1 have been amended, and claim 2 has been canceled. Reconsideration in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,199,937 or Japanese Patent Publication 03-080954 to Wada et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 defines a rotating disc having slot arranged radially from a rotation axis. Claim 1 further specifies that the slots are closed at radial outermost ends thereof such that the rotating disc comprises a continuous circumference (see, e.g., Figure 2). In this manner, the discs are less likely to deform and are easier to store. The slots in the Wada patent, in contrast, are open at radial outermost ends thereof in order to accommodate the outward swing of the buckets 3. Since this subject matter is thus lacking in the Wada patent, Applicant respectfully submits that for at least this reason, the rejection is misplaced.

Moreover, claim 1 recites that the container storing section has a rectangular parallelepiped frame containing tube-type specimen containers arranged in a line in a radial direction of the rotating disc Wada additionally lacks any such tube-type specimen containers. For this reason also, Applicant submits that the rejection is misplaced.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are patentable over the art of record and that the application is in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner believe that anything further is desirable in order to place the application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

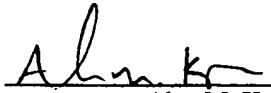
ITOH
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Prompt passage to issuance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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